

Provides relative to certain development districts:

New law creates the Alexandria Central Economic Development District as a political subdivision of the state for the purpose of redevelopment in the central business district in Alexandria. Provides for district boundaries.

New law provides for governance of the district by a 12-member board of commissioners, three members each to be appointed by the governing authority of Alexandria and the governing authority of Rapides Parish and two members each to be appointed by the Central Cities Development Council, the Central Louisiana Business League, and the Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce. Provides that the nine members not appointed by the governing authority of Alexandria shall be subject to confirmation by such governing authority. Provides that the governing authority of Alexandria shall also appoint any member if the appropriate appointing authority fails to make an appointment within 30 days after notice of a vacancy. Requires that each member be a registered voter of Alexandria. Authorizes the appointing authority to remove a commissioner for cause. Provides for four-year terms after staggered initial terms.

New law requires selection of officers from among the members. Provides for one-year terms for such officers but authorizes reelection. Requires that the board adopt rules and keep a record of its actions, which record shall be a public record. Authorizes the board to employ or contract with an executive director and set his compensation and employment terms and the term of such contract. Also authorizes the board to employ other employees.

Existing law (Parish Redevelopment Law; R.S. 33:4625) authorizes any parish or city to create community redevelopment agencies. Grants such an agency the following authority:

- (1) To carry out redevelopment projects and related activities, to make and execute contracts and other instruments, and to disseminate slum clearance and redevelopment information.
- (2) To provide or to provide for the furnishing or repair of services, privileges, works, streets, roads, public utilities, or other facilities for or in connection with a redevelopment project; to install, construct, and reconstruct streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements; and to agree to federal law or federal regulations pertaining to prevailing salaries or wages or labor standards.
- (3) To acquire real property and improvements or personal property for its administrative purposes; to hold, improve, clear, or prepare for redevelopment of any such property; to mortgage, pledge, hypothecate, or otherwise encumber or dispose of any real property; to insure any real or personal property or operations. Provides that existing statutory law relative to the acquisition, clearance, or disposition of property by public bodies shall not restrict a municipality, parish, or community redevelopment agency from executing a redevelopment project unless such law specifically provides such restrictions.
- (4) With the approval of the local governing body:
 - (a) Prior to approval of a redevelopment plan or of any modification of the plan, to acquire real property in a redevelopment area, demolish and remove any structures on the property, and pay all costs related thereto.

- (b) To assume the responsibility to bear any loss resulting from the exercise of authority under existing law in the event that the real property is not made a part of the redevelopment plan or project.
 - (c) To invest any redevelopment funds in property or securities pursuant to existent law; to redeem bonds or to purchase bonds at less than redemption price.
 - (d) To borrow money and to apply for and accept financial assistance and to give required security.
- (5) To make surveys and plans and to adopt or approve, modify, and amend such plans, which plans may include:
 - (a) Plans for carrying out a program of voluntary or compulsory repair or rehabilitation of buildings and improvements.
 - (b) Plans for the enforcement of laws, codes, and regulations relating to the use of land, the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, and to the compulsory repair, rehabilitation, demolition, or removal of buildings and improvements.
 - (c) Appraisals, title searches, surveys, studies, and other plans and work necessary to prepare for the undertaking of redevelopment projects and related activities.
- (6) To develop, test, and report methods and techniques, and carry out demonstrations and other activities for the prevention and the elimination of slums and urban blight, for developing and demonstrating new or improved means of providing housing for families and persons of low income, and to apply for, accept, and utilize federal grants for such purposes.
- (7) To prepare plans for and assist in the relocation of persons and displaced entities and to make relocation payments for moving and readjustment expenses and losses of property.
- (8) To close or cause to be closed, vacate, plan, or replan streets, roads, sidewalks, ways, or other places; to plan or cause to be replanned any part of the municipality or parish; and to make payment or reimbursement of reasonable actual costs incurred as a result of utility relocation after making appropriate adjustment for any improvements or betterments to the utility's facilities made in connection with the relocation.
- (9) To sue and to be sued; adopt and have a seal and to alter the same at pleasure; to make and from time to time amend and repeal bylaws, orders, rules, and regulations.
- (10) To enter into contracts with the local governing authority or any other public body.
- (11) To make available to the government and to the municipality or parish or any appropriate agency the recommendation of the agency affecting any area in its field of operation or property therein, which it may deem likely to promote the public health, morals, safety, or welfare.
- (12) To exercise all or any part or combination of powers herein granted.

New law provides that the Alexandria Central Economic Development District

shall have the authority of a redevelopment agency.

New law requires the board to formulate a redevelopment plan for the district and submit such plan to the governing authority of Alexandria for review. Requires the board to formulate a program to implement the redevelopment plan in such a manner as to aid and encourage private development of the area and promote and coordinate public development. Authorizes the board to conduct studies and to consult with departments of the city of Alexandria and other agencies concerned with matters affecting or affected by the program in formulating such a program. Authorizes the board to implement the program. Authorizes the board to employ or contract with professionals necessary for the financing and implementation of the construction, renovation, maintenance, or operation of facilities described in the redevelopment plan. Further authorizes the board to contract for the construction, renovation, maintenance, or operation of the facilities.

New law requires preparation of an annual budget in accordance with existing law (the Louisiana Local Government Budget Act).

New law authorizes the district, subject to approval by the governing authority of Alexandria and the electors of the district, to levy an ad valorem tax not exceeding 15 mills for the purpose of planning, constructing, acquiring, operating, or maintaining public facilities contemplated by the redevelopment plan and for the operating expenses of the district.

New law further authorizes the district, subject to voter approval, to issue general obligation bonds, in accordance with existing law, for the purposes of constructing, acquiring, or improving any work of public improvement contemplated by the redevelopment plan.

New law provides that any tax levied by the district shall be in addition to other taxes levied in Rapides Parish. Further provides that services and programs to be provided shall be in addition to the services and programs which are provided by other governing authorities.

New law authorizes the district to enter into agreements with any person providing for contributions or payments towards the cost of financing public facilities in the district. Further authorizes the district to issue bonds secured wholly or partly by the revenues of such agreements.

New law requires that the district, to the extent allowed by state and federal law, adopt a set-aside program in accordance such laws.

New law requires audit of the district's financial records in accordance with existing law.

New law also creates the New Orleans Central City Economic Development District for the purpose of establishing and adopting a master economic development plan for the central city area. Provides that such district shall have all of the rights, powers, privileges, and immunities granted to political subdivisions for industrial, commercial, research, and economic development purposes, excluding the powers of expropriation and taxation.

New law establishes the boundaries of the district and provides for its governance by a board of commissioners comprised as follows:

- (1) One member shall be the mayor of New Orleans or his designee.
- (2) One member shall be appointed by the mayor of New Orleans.

- (3) One member shall be the city councilman who represents the district or his designee.
- (4) One member shall be the state senator who represents the district or his designee.
- (5) One member shall be appointed by the state senator who represents the district.
- (6) Each state representative who represents the district shall be a member or shall appoint a designee.
- (7) Three members shall be members of and appointed by Central City Partnership.
- (8) Two members shall be members of and appointed by the Aretha Castle Halley Business Association.

New law requires that the state senator representing the area call the first meeting no later than Jan. 31, 2000. Provides for the selection of officers.

New law provides that the board in preparing the economic development plan shall make surveys and studies of present conditions and future economic growth of the district. Provides that the purpose of the plan shall be guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious economic development of the district to best promote the natural, cultural, and economic resources, and the citizens and businesses of the district.

New law provides that members of the board of commissioners of an economic and industrial development district in any parish with a population of between 78,000 and 84,000 shall be eligible for reappointment and that nine members of any such board shall constitute a quorum.

Effective upon signature of governor (June 28, 1999).

(Adds R.S. 33:2740.46, 2740.47, and 2740.48)